

FLYING HIGH AND PROUD HISTORIC FLAGS GRACE OLD TOWN HALL

Visitors to Old Town Hall may notice something different about the American flag flying above their heads. In keeping with the historic nature of the site, the City is flying historic versions of the U.S. flag on a new, recently installed flagpole.

The flags will be rotated periodically. The 1858 version of the flag marks Minnesota's statehood and features 32 stars. The 1912 flag, featuring 48 stars, was the official U.S. flag for 47 years until 1959. According to Recreation Supervisor Mark Morrison, the 1891 flag, which has 44 stars, will be featured most often. (See right.)

"The 1891 version of the American flag is the flag that was actively used in the U.S. during the time of Old Town Hall's original construction in 1892," Morrison said. "The other two flags will be used for special programs and to mark historical events."

Morrison said the flags are important because each one represents a different period in Bloomington and Minnesota history.

"This is really providing a unique opportunity for the public to see firsthand more than 150 years of U.S. flag history here in Bloomington," he said.



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FEBRUARY 2010

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When you see **WEBSITE KEYWORDS**, go to www.ci.bloomington.mn.us for more information.



AMERICAN BOULEVARD LRT STATION DEBUTS LONG-AWAITED STATION IS NOW OPEN TO COMMUTERS



The American Boulevard Light Rail Transit (LRT) Station at 34th Avenue opened to frigid temperatures at its December ribbon-cutting, making it a welcome alternative for people looking to use transit for a faster, safer commute.

The last of 19 stations on the Hiawatha LRT line, the American Boulevard Station has been a long time coming. The plan for the station was

postponed to help with the cost of a major route modification that placed the terminal station in the Mall of America's east parking ramp, although the footprint for the American Boulevard Station was kept in the original construction.

In 2005, the City and the Metropolitan Council applied for a federal grant to help fund the construction of the American Boulevard Station. The grant was awarded and construction commenced in spring 2009.

With separate structures for southbound and northbound riders, American Boulevard Station is the only split platform station on the Hiawatha Line. The platform is designed to accommodate three LRT cars.

The American Boulevard LRT Station is part of a bigger vision for the area east of TH-77. Bloomington's Director of Community Development Larry Lee said the City's vision for the area around the station is for a new, transit-oriented residential neighborhood with five to seven thousand residents.

McGough Development owns a 43-acre parcel surrounding the Bloomington Central LRT Station. In

2005, the City approved a development plan that includes 1,100 transit-oriented residential units. Of those residential dwellings, 263 are in the existing Reflections condominium buildings.

"McGough's approved plans show 1,100 residential units on the Bloomington Central Station site. The City expects up to 1,900 additional residences to be developed on other parcels within walking distance of the American Boulevard and Bloomington Central stations," Lee said.

Senior Civil Engineer Schane Rudlang, one of many City employees who worked on the project, said although there were some challenges getting the signal timing coordinated between vehicle traffic and the LRT, the project went very smoothly.

"It was rewarding to contribute on a project that completes the original vision for the LRT in Bloomington," Rudlang said.

The station took six months to construct. Money to build the new station came from the Bloomington Port Authority, Hennepin County, the Metropolitan Council and the federal government.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED HAVE FUN WHILE IMPROVING THE LIVES OF OTHERS

Make a positive impact in your community through volunteerism. Human Services has a variety of opportunities to connect you to your community through meaningful volunteer jobs. Opportunities exist to work with youth, families, multicultural communities and people with disabilities. For more information, call Human Services at 952-563-8733 or TTY 952-563-8740.

2009 HEALTH PROMOTION AWARD FRIENDSHIP VILLAGE RECOGNIZED



The 2009 Health Promotion Award was recently presented to Friendship Village, a senior living community in Bloomington, for its ongoing efforts to promote physical fitness to residents through its Six Dimensional Wellness program. Friendship Village has engaged more than 300 residents in fitness classes since the program began.

The Health Promotion Award recognizes an individual, business or organization that has made a difference in the health and wellness of Bloomington residents.

For more information, call Public Health at 952-563-8919.

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WORKING TOWARD LONG-TERM SUCCESS
ADAPTING TO THE SHORT-TERM CHALLENGES

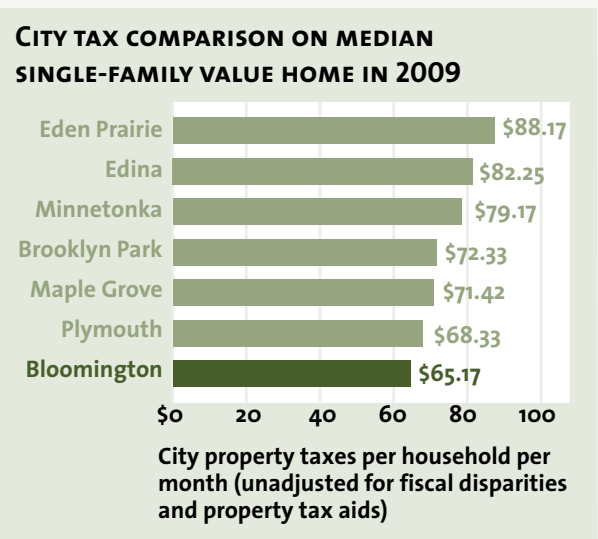
By Mayor Gene Winstead

As noted in the December *Briefing*, the City’s long-term vision is to make Bloomington a more sustainable, safe, attractive and competitive place for people and businesses. We do this by providing quality services at reasonable, competitive costs and by supporting the long term property investments of residents and businesses through City reinvestment and renewal.

Until the 1950s, development in Bloomington was relatively inexpensive. Homes were built with their own on-site wells and septic systems; they were also located on temporary streets. This model, while saving initial development costs, proved not to be the best approach. By the late 1950s, the majority of Bloomington wells were polluted by the septic systems. As a result, the City Council undertook the costly, but necessary, construction of a citywide sewer and water system. This not only made for safe drinking water in homes, but allowed for significant commercial-industrial development that was not possible with on-site utilities.

Today, 50 percent of Bloomington’s property tax base is commercial and industrial property – including nearly 8,000 hotel rooms. Our hotel guest population on any given night exceeds the populations of 87 percent of the communities in Minnesota and generates \$5 million in lodging taxes for the General Fund, which results in lower property taxes for residents and businesses. This is despite the fact that the metro area’s fiscal disparities take away a net 30 percent of Bloomington’s commercial-industrial tax base for distribution metro-wide.

In the 1950s and 60s, the City issued bonded debt to make the necessary water and sewer improvements. The high debt to value ratio created a bond rating of BBB in the early 1970s. Over the next two decades, prudent financial management helped the City improve to an AA rating. To further increase its rating during the 1990s, the City began modeling the economic cycles traditionally found in market economies; Bloomington also developed strategies to deal with economic downturns.



The City now creates a five-year General Fund financial model and 10- to 15-year models for other funds. While we cannot predict the future, modeling allows us to see which longer-term reinvestments and renewal are needed and what level and manner of services to provide over the long term. Modeling also allows us to react in the shorter term and make the necessary changes to deal with economic cycles.

These strategies are used not only during downturns, but during good times as well. The City continually looks for ways to adapt services and increase its productivity to meet evolving needs and staffs services only at levels that can be sustained during normal downturns. A financially strong organization can take advantage of lower costs found during downturns for such things as the Pavement Management Program, enabling the City to save money in the long term and position itself well when the upturn comes.

All this work has paid off. In 1998, the City gained an Aaa rating from Moody’s and, subsequently, from Standard and Poor’s and Fitch. Bloomington is one of only 24 communities nationwide to have a triple



A rating. What does this mean to you? The excellent ratings lower our costs to borrow for improvements such as street construction and redevelopment, which in turn lowers Bloomington’s property taxes.

In Minnesota, property value is used to calculate your proportional share of the total property tax levy. *For property tax information, see page 3.* In a 2009 comparison of seven cities in Hennepin County with more than 20,000 residents, the cost of City services for a single-family, median-priced home in Bloomington ranked lowest, *see above.*

Despite Bloomington’s relatively high fiscal disparities impact, the property tax difference on equally valued commercial/industrial properties is only 1 percent of the typical overall commercial-industrial lease rates.

Bloomington’s attitude remains “steady as we go.” Decisions made during better times improve our options in more difficult times; meanwhile we continue to take advantage of every opportunity to make Bloomington an even better place to live. For more information, visit the City’s website.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: PROPERTY TAXES.

NEW CITY ATTORNEY
ASSOCIATE CITY ATTORNEY
SANDRA JOHNSON PROMOTED

Sandra Johnson was promoted to City Attorney by City Manager



Mark Bernhardson to replace outgoing City Attorney David Ornstein. Ornstein retired in November after 36 years with the City.

Johnson has been employed with the City as an Associate City Attorney since 1991. Prior to that, she was an Assistant County Attorney with Anoka County. Johnson was raised in St. Louis Park, graduating from the University of Minnesota and the University of Minnesota Law School. She is vice president of the Minnesota Association of City Attorneys, a board member of the League of Minnesota

Cities Municipal Appellate Amicus Program, a member of the Minnesota Criminal Justice Task Force and staff to the Hennepin County Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee.

Johnson lives in Minnetonka with her husband, Coon Rapids Assistant City Attorney Douglas L. Johnson. They have two sons.

“I’m honored to be appointed as Dave Ornstein’s successor and look forward to working with my colleagues in the City Attorney’s Office and many others as we face the challenges and opportunities ahead,” Johnson said.

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The *Briefing*, published bimonthly by the City of Bloomington, is mailed to our residents and businesses. Direct comments and requests for Braille, larger print or computer disk to Communications Administrator Janine Hill, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3027; PH 952-563-8819; TTY 952-563-8740; FAX 952-563-8715; E-MAIL jhill@ci.bloomington.mn.us. Website: www.ci.bloomington.mn.us

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Elected officials presented for informational purposes.

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The City of Bloomington complies with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its services, programs, or activities. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all City of Bloomington services, programs, and activities. The City has designated coordinators to facilitate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and to coordinate compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations. For more information, contact the Human Services Division, City of Bloomington, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington, MN 55431-3027; 952-563-8733 (Voice); 952-563-8740 (TTY).

Upon request, this information can be available in Braille, large print, audio tape and/or electronic format.

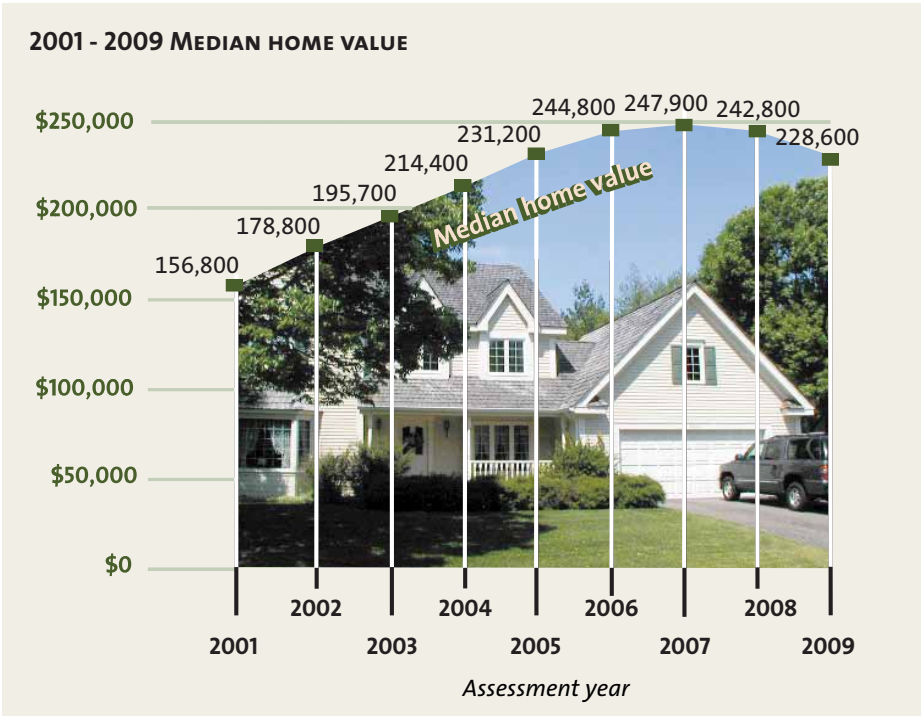
FINANCIAL UPDATE

CITY COUNCIL APPROVES 2010 PROPERTY TAX LEVY

In an effort to maintain an affordable price for City services, the Bloomington City Council adopted a property tax levy for 2010 of \$44,606,281, an increase of 2.98 percent from 2009. Based on this tax levy, the City's portion of 2010 total residential property taxes – approximately 29 percent – will be \$67.55 per month in 2010 for a median value home assessed at \$228,600.

“The Minnesota property tax system is very complex,” Chief Financial Officer Lori Economy-Scholler said. “As specified by state law, property values used for taxes payable in 2010 are based on 2008 property sales.”

Some homeowners saw the value of their properties decrease and their portions of local taxes increase. This is because there is not a direct correlation between property values and property taxes as there is between sales and income taxes. Governments in Minnesota levy property tax revenue; they do not set the tax rate. In the property tax system, market value is used to create a proportionate share of the tax levy. In other words, a person's tax bill is a factor of how all other properties in the city change in value. The average residential



property decreased 5.8 percent in value for taxes payable in 2010. The overall average tax change for that property was a 1 percent increase. If your property maintained its value better than the average property, your share of the tax levy showed more than a 1 percent increase. Home sales in 2008 reflect the housing downturn and are the basis for the 2009 assessment for taxes payable in

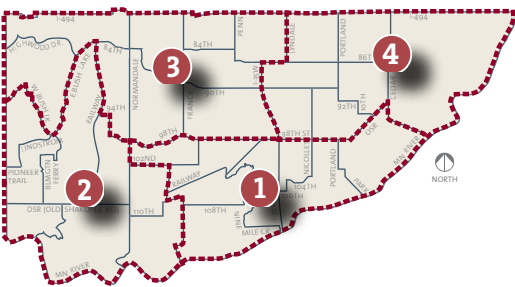
2010. Home sales in 2009 will be the basis for 2011 taxes. Total market value for all Bloomington properties was nearly level at \$11.8 billion for taxes payable in 2008 and 2009 and dropped to \$11.2 billion for 2010.

For more information, contact Chief Financial Officer Lori Economy-Scholler at 952-563-8791 or leconomy@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

GET TO KNOW YOUR CITY COUNCIL

MEET YOUR LOCAL CITY COUNCILMEMBERS

Bloomington has a Council-Manager form of government. The City Council exercises the legislative power and determines all City policies. The City Manager, who is hired by the Council, is responsible for administrating City business and assisting in policy development. The Council also appoints citizens to advisory boards and commissions. The Bloomington City Council consists of a mayor, who presides over Council meetings, and six councilmembers, *pictured with contact*



- 1 Councilmember District I**
Steve Peterson
- 2 Councilmember District II**
Tom Hulting
- 3 Councilmember District III**
Steve Elkins
- 4 Councilmember District IV**
Vern Wilcox

information on page 2. The mayor and two councilmembers are elected at-large, representing all residents. The four remaining councilmembers are elected from separate districts. *See map at left.* All terms are four years.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: CITY COUNCIL.

- Mayor**
Gene Winstead
- Councilmember At Large**
Amy Grady
- Councilmember At Large**
Karen Nordstrom

PUBLIC SERVICE

A LOOK BACK AT THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED



The 1960s City Council with former Mayor Donald Hasselberg, fourth from the right.

On May 11, 1858 the town of Bloomington was established and the 25 organizers approved a \$100 budget. Yet it wasn't until 1958 that Bloomington changed to today's current council-manager form of government.

For an historical look at Bloomington's past Mayors and Councilmembers, visit the City's website.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: COUNCILMEMBERS.



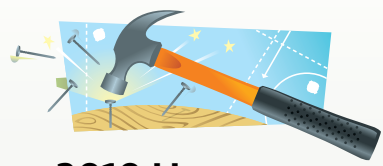
WHO TO CALL?

CITY PHONE NUMBERS

Have a question or concern and don't know who to call? Whatever information you need – we're here to help. The following are the most frequently called City contacts.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: PHONE DIRECTORY.

Police/Fire/Medical Emergency 911 <i>If you cannot complete a call using 911, call 952-563-4900.</i>	
Animal Shelter	952-563-4942
Business and Pet Licenses	952-563-8728
Center for the Arts	952-563-8881
Creekside Community Center	952-563-4944
Dwan Golf Club	952-563-8702
Housing, financial assistance, health insurance, food or transportation needs, legal services	952-563-4957
Hyland Greens Golf Course	952-563-8868
Inspections:	
Building	952-563-8930
Electrical	952-563-8931
Fire	952-563-8933
Heating	952-563-8930
Plumbing	952-563-8932
Job Information Line	952-563-8810
Mayor/City Council	952-563-8782
Motor Vehicle	952-563-8719
Noise, weeds or problem properties	952-563-8934
Parks and Recreation	952-563-8877
Passports	952-563-4923
Police non-emergency	952-563-4900
Property Information	952-563-8722
Public Health	952-563-8900
Recycling	952-563-8750
Section 8 Housing	952-563-8937
Sewer and Water 24-Hour Emergency	952-563-4905
Voter Registration	952-563-8729
Snow Line	952-563-8768
TTY (Text telephone)	952-563-8740
Volunteers	952-563-4949
Water – 24 Hour Emergency	952-563-4905
Water and Sewer Utility Billing	952-563-8726
Water backups and leaks	952-563-8777



2010 HOME IMPROVEMENT FAIR
LEARN FROM THE EXPERTS



The City of Bloomington will host its ninth Home Improvement Fair, **Saturday, February 20, 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.**, at Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road.

If you’re considering making home improvements, you won’t want to miss this free event. Fairgoers will be able to visit a variety of home improvement exhibits, have questions answered by professionals in the home improvement field and get ideas for remodeling projects.

The Home Improvement Fair is a great opportunity for the whole family to have fun. There will be plenty of activities and entertainment for kids, including booths where children can create their own projects.

In 2009, more than 1,800 people visited the Home Improvement Fair; 2010 is expected to attract even more.

For more information, call Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority Program Manager Bryan Hartman at 952-563-8943.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: HOME FAIR.

BLOOMINGTON
TOP 10

Top 10 will be a regular Briefing feature, reporting on some of the ways Bloomington and our region excel.

#7 GREEN CITY

The SustainLane website and Business Facilities magazine both rated our metro area #7 in their green city rankings. We did particularly well in the subcategories for local food and agriculture (#1), knowledge base and communications (#4), city innovation (#6), and green economy (#7). To catch up with #1 ranked Portland, Oregon, we need to do better in housing affordability (#32), transit ridership (#25), green building (#25), and street congestion (#25).

Business Facilities commented that “the coveted green stamp reflects the growing importance of environmental considerations in site selection.”

Earth Action Heroes protect the earth. Whether it’s saving energy or guarding Bloomington’s precious natural resources, these individuals are making a difference. Here are your neighbors in action...

EARTH ACTION HEROES
COOKING UP A GREEN KITCHEN

When Larry Lee and his wife Betsy decided it was time to update their 1960s kitchen they knew they wanted the updates to be sustainable, yet their first priority was to find a building/design company that had a reputation for quality and flexibility. It just so happened that a small building and design firm dedicated to sustainable building, Otogawa-Anschel, met the Lees’ criteria and then some.

“The fact that their philosophy is ‘green’ was a plus,” Lee said. “We were looking for a company that would allow us to do some work ourselves. Another reason we chose them was because of the awards they had received for small kitchen design.”

So begins the story of how a small, inefficient kitchen was transformed into a bright and energy-efficient space.

After the new design was prepared and approved, the Lees agreed to do the demolition, install tiles, purchase appliances and fixtures and paint to keep project costs down. In addition, the designer retained existing materials where possible, such as the existing ceramic floor tile and some of the built-in cabinets.

The project’s first stages involved recycling the demolition materials and old appliances. The company prides itself on recycling almost all debris generated

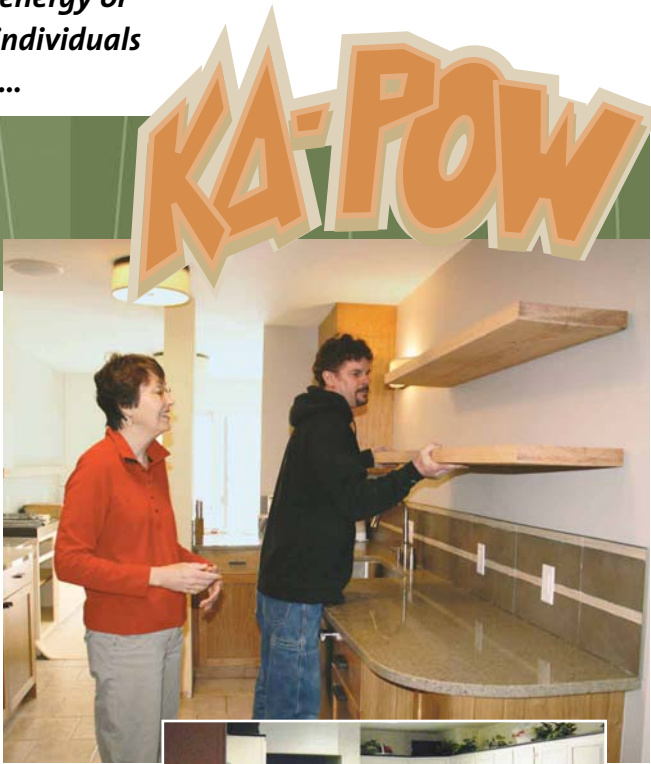
from projects – from wood and gypsum board to the cast iron kitchen sink – and using only recycled and engineered lumber.

According to designer Greg Kraus, “Some of the design challenges we faced were inefficient cabinets and appliance layout, cramped work spaces and cabinets and countertops that were showing their age. Moving the appliance locations resulted in 40 percent more counter space and created more storage.”

Focusing on recycling and local materials, the builders used cabinets made by a company in Eden Prairie. Wood shelves reclaimed from an old barn came from Manomen Resawn Timbers in Hugo. In addition, they installed attractive and durable Minnesota-made Cambria quartz countertops.

Removing parts of an interior wall allowed for more natural light to flow into the kitchen. Using advanced framing techniques means less lumber is consumed and the small additional cost for better insulation and Energy Star-rated appliances will be recouped by reduced utility bills.

The designers suggested replacing the Lees’ fluorescent tube lighting



with energy-efficient task lighting throughout the space.

“Greg asks a lot of questions about how you use the space,” Lee said. “He encourages selecting energy-efficient lighting and appliances, which we did.”

For tips on how you can make your home more sustainable, be sure to attend the Home Improvement Fair, see article left, or visit the City’s website.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: SUSTAINABILITY.



THINK GREEN
Consider donating or selling usable items. Look for Citywide Garage Sale information in the April Briefing.

THINK SPRING!

2010 CURBSIDE CLEANUP
GET YOUR HOME INTO SHAPE

The Spring Curbside Cleanup is right around the corner. **Be sure you’re prepared by setting your materials at the curb before 7 a.m. on your pickup day.** As in previous years, trucks will go through each neighborhood only once.

Do not set out appliances, such as refrigerators and air conditioners, until the morning of your collection day. People cut lines in these appliances

to salvage the copper. Freon or Chlorofluorocarbons are released into the air and accelerate ozone depletion.

Seniors and disabled residents should contact their Neighborhood Watch block captains or call Human Services, 952-563-8733, TTY 952-563-8740, for assistance. Requests for assistance must be made at least one week in advance.



SCHEDULE, FROM EAST TO WEST	
East of Portland	Saturday, April 10
Portland to Penn	Saturday, April 17
Penn to France	Saturday, April 24
France to Normandale	Saturday, May 1
West of Normandale	Saturday, May 8

GREENER GARDENING
LEARN ABOUT RAIN GARDENS



The City of Bloomington and Lower Minnesota River Watershed District are hosting two rain garden workshops for Bloomington residents, **Thursday, May 6 and May 20, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**, in the Bloomington Public Works building, 1700 West 98th Street. Attend and you could win a raffle for a free rain barrel. The workshops are facilitated by Metro Blooms, a nonprofit gardening organization, and local landscape ecologist Rusty Schmidt. Hennepin County Master Gardeners will also be available to answer your gardening questions.

To register, visit www.metroblooms.org or call 651-699-2426.

CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY



RESOURCES ABOUND
HUMAN SERVICES FOR YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES

Human Services provides exceptional programs and services to community members of all ages. Programs are accessible to youth, families, multicultural communities and active, aging adults and people with disabilities.

For more information, call Human Services at 952-563-8733 or TTY 952-563-8740. To sign up for e-mail updates, go to our website, click on *E-Subscribe* and subscribe to “Human Services.”

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: HUMAN SERVICES.

TAX PREPARATION SERVICES
FREE INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE AT CREEKSIDE

Tax assistance will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis, **January 26 - April 15**, to individuals who meet income-qualifying guidelines of \$30,000 or less for individuals and \$45,000 or less for families.

Human Services is partnering with AccountAbility Minnesota and AARP Tax-Aide to make these programs available at Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Avenue South.

Taxpayers with complex tax returns are advised to seek paid tax assistance.

ACCOUNTABILITY MINNESOTA

AccountAbility Minnesota will provide tax assistance to individuals who meet income guidelines.

When: Tuesdays and Thursdays, January 26 - April 15.

Time: 5:30 - 9:30 p.m.

When: Saturdays, January 30 - April 10.

Time: 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
(March hours: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.)



TAX FORMS AVAILABLE

Federal tax forms are available to be photocopied at Creekside.

AARP TAX-AIDE

AARP Tax-Aide will provide free tax preparation services to taxpayers with middle to low incomes, with special attention to people age 60 and older.

When: Mondays and Tuesdays, February 1 - April 13.

Time: 9 a.m. - noon.



LET’S GET TOGETHER!
GLOBAL CELEBRATION 2010

World cultural crafters, artists, food vendors and entertainers are needed for the 3rd Annual Global Celebration. The celebration will be held **Saturday, June 19**, at Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road.

The event is a kaleidoscope of diverse entertainment, colorful exhibits, ethnic cuisine and games and activities for children. Last year, more than 1,500 people joined in the fun and this year is expected to be even bigger.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: GLOBAL CELEBRATION.

For information on BSCO programs and activities, call 952-563-8713, TTY 952-563-8740, or e-mail sistercity@ci.bloomington.mn.us.



EXPLORE A NEW PLACE
STUDENTS – VISIT IZUMI CITY

The Bloomington Sister City Organization (BSCO) is seeking Bloomington high school and college delegates to participate in the 2010 College and High School Student Exchange, a cultural exchange program with our sister city of Izumi City, Japan.

BSCO has offered the student exchange program between Bloomington and Izumi City since 1994. The 2010 trip will feature two weeks of sightseeing, learning opportunities and fun. Students are not required to be part of a Japanese language program to participate.

Students and chaperones will stay with host families. Applicants who are selected will be expected to participate in all pre- and post-trip activities and represent our community to the highest standard.

OUR SISTER CITY

TASTE OF JAPAN
PUTTING THE “FUN” BACK INTO FUNDRAISER

Join the Bloomington Sister City Organization (BSCO) for the annual fundraiser Taste of Japan. This year’s event will be held **Saturday, February 27, 6 - 10 p.m.**, at the Hilton Minneapolis/Bloomington Hotel, 3900 American Boulevard West.

Experience a variety of delicious Japanese foods, bid on great silent auction items and enjoy live music, karaoke, games and much more.

Tickets are \$55 for adults and \$25 for students. Bloomington Sister City Organization members pay \$50 for adults and \$20 for students.

Consider “making a night of it” and stay at the Hilton Minneapolis/Bloomington Hotel for just \$79, plus tax. To book a room, call 952-893-9500 and ask for the BSCO rate.



RACE OF A LIFETIME
BLOOMINGTON RUNNERS COMPETE IN SENSHU MARATHON



The excitement is building for Bloomington residents and marathon runners Darrell Christensen and Sean Faulk as they prepare to compete in the Senshu International Marathon in Osaka, Japan, later this month.

Christensen, who used to work as a controller for Harco Corporation, began his running career after he retired in 2000. Since then, he has completed 14 marathons and doesn’t show signs of stopping. Christenson said he began running to get physically fit.

Faulk is a social studies teacher at Jefferson High School who has competed in 15 marathons, including a 50-mile trail race. He started running in 2003.

This is the first international marathon for both men.

Each year, two runners are selected by the Bloomington Sister City Organization as part of a cultural exchange between Bloomington and Izumi City, Japan. Since 1997, the program has sent 18 Bloomington runners to Japan. The 26.2-mile international marathon invites runners from all over the world to compete.



LATINO RESOURCE FAIR
AND FESTIVAL
YOUR SOURCE FOR
INFORMATION

Human Services will host a Latino Resource Fair and Festival, **Saturday, March 6, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.**, at Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road. Representatives from a variety of community organizations will share information and resources specific to the Latino community. Topics will include legal matters such as citizenship, post-secondary education, transportation, health care, recreation, City services and more. Visitors will also enjoy food and music.

The Latino Resource Fair is sponsored by Bloomington Human Services and Human Rights Commission, Normandale Community College and Bloomington School District 271.

For more information, contact Human Services. Details will be available on our website mid-February.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS:
LATINO RESOURCE FAIR.

ADULT SPORTS

LET’S PLAY BALL!
AMERICA’S FAVORITE PASTIME



It may be cold outside, but that doesn’t mean you can’t start thinking about warm summer evenings playing ball. Registrations are now being accepted for summer adult softball leagues. More than 300 teams compete throughout the summer and fall at recreational and competitive levels.

Leagues are hosted at Dred Scott, 10820 Bloomington Ferry Road, and Valley View, 9000 Portland Avenue South, Playfields. Leagues are for adults, ages 18 and older. Divisions include men’s, men’s fast pitch, women’s and co-rec. Teams are sanctioned in the ASA and USSSA.

For more information, contact Jason Hicks at 952-563-8880 or e-mail jhicks@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

When: Monday - Friday, starting April 30.
Cost: \$550 + tax, Single Game Leagues.
\$780 + tax, Double Header Leagues.
Deadline: March 12.

GET ACTIVE AGAIN
JOIN THE SENIOR MEN’S VOLLEYBALL TEAM

The Born Again Jocks Volleyball League welcomes men, 55 years and older, with all levels of playing ability. For more information, call Dick Wortman at 952-888-1814.

When: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, February 1 - April 30.
Time: Warm-ups, 8:45 a.m. Games, 9 a.m.
Location: Kennedy Activity Center, 9701 Nicollet Avenue South.

MOVE FOR HEALTH
FITNESS FOR OLDER ADULTS



Parks and Recreation offers a variety of fun fitness opportunities for seniors, such as exercise classes, bocce ball, Born Again Jocks, T’ai Chi Chih, line dancing, walking clubs and more.

For more information, contact Parks and Recreation.

DREAMING OF WARMER DAYS AHEAD

Contact Parks and Recreation at 952-563-8877 for more information on these events.



SUMMER SPECTRUM
SUPER SIGN-UP SATURDAY

Register for youth programs online or in person on Super Sign-Up Saturday. Look for more details in the Summer Spectrum 2010 program brochure.

When: Saturday, March 13, 9 - 10 a.m.
Where: Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: SUMMER SPECTRUM.

BLOOMINGTON FAMILY AQUATIC CENTER (BFAC)
DISCOUNTED SEASON PASSES FOR RESIDENTS

Buy your BFAC resident season pass before April 16 and receive \$2 off. Purchase your pass prior to June 12 and receive \$1 off. Passes are sold at the Parks and Recreation counter at Civic Plaza through June 11. Beginning June 7, passes will be available daily, 4 - 7 p.m., at the Bloomington Family Aquatic Center, 301 East 90th Street. The BFAC is open June 12 - August 22 and weekends through Labor Day.

2010 RESIDENT SEASON PASS (PRICES INCLUDE TAX)	
Infant, Age 1 and under	Free
Child, Age 2 - 10	\$14
Young Adult Age 11 - 15	\$24
Adult, Age 16 - 54	\$44
Senior, Age 55 and up	\$14

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: AQUATIC CENTER.

SPONSOR A RIDE
HELP PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION

Bloomington’s Adaptive Recreation and Learning Exchange (AR&LE) needs your help to provide safe, reliable transportation for adults with disabilities. The Sponsor-a-Ride program now offers the opportunity to recognize riders through sponsorship or purchase the gift of a ride for others. Sponsors may have their name displayed on their designated bus and be recognized in the AR&LE catalog.

For more information, call AR&LE at 952-828-0983

WEBSITE KEYWORD: ARLE.



ON THE ICE

For more information, call BIG at 952-563-8841.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: BIG.

A RISING STAR
BLOOMINGTON TEEN WINS INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

Bloomington teen Kiri Baga is a busy girl. She skates six days a week, three hours a day, dances and takes acting classes, all while going to school, but you won’t hear her complaining.

“It’s a different teen experience, but I love it,” Baga said.

Baga is only 14 years old and has already won two international junior competitions in Germany and Turkey. According to her coach Lorie Charbonneau, jumping from novice to junior events and beating more experienced skaters is rare on the ice.

“Kiri will make it to the top of the sport,” Charbonneau said. “Nothing can set us so far back that we won’t keep going.”

Next up for Baga is to prepare for the U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Spokane, Washington. Then it’s on to senior level competitions.

“My goal for 2010 is to land all my triples, except the triple axel,” Baga said. “My big dream is to make it to the 2014 Olympics.”

Baga began her figure skating career in Duluth, but moved to Bloomington to be closer to her trainer and her training facility: Bloomington Ice Garden (BIG).

“We love the comprehensive program at BIG,” Charbonneau said. “We’re really proud that we can train at such an amazing facility right here in Bloomington.”

FIGURE SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS
BIG TO HOST NATIONAL EVENT



Photo courtesy of Gary Griffith/Quicksilver Shots.

The 2010 Adult Figure Skating Championship will take place April 13 - 17 at the Bloomington Ice Garden. According to the Bloomington Convention and Visitors Bureau, it is expected to attract more than 600 athletes and their families, coaches and officials to the city over the five-day event.

BIG will also be the main practice facility for the 2010 United States Synchronized National Championships held March 3 - 6, which is expected to draw competitors from across the nation.

NEW BAA PRESIDENT
DAVID SCHULZE TO HEAD ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

The Bloomington Athletic Association (BAA), one of the largest youth sports organizations in the country, has elected David Schulze to replace outgoing president Dan Wallerus. Schulze has been a BAA board member since 2005. Actively involved

in BAA, Schulze holds coaching positions for baseball, basketball and volleyball.

“I believe the many things I learned from Dan Wallerus will help me to build a foundation for success going forward,” Schulze said.

Schulze lives in Bloomington with his wife and three children. For more BAA information, visit baaonline.org.



EVENTS SURE TO ENTICE YOUR TASTE BUDS

HOP TO IT ! ! ! !

SPRING EGG HUNT FOR KIDS AGE 10 AND UNDER

You won't want to miss this "eggs"traordinary annual event sponsored by Bloomington Parks and Recreation and the Bloomington Breakfast Optimist Club. Check the City's website mid-February for more details.

When: Saturday, April 3, 9:30 a.m. - noon.
Where: Normandale Lake Bandshell, 5901 West 84th Street
Time: Hunt begins 11 a.m.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: SPRING EGG HUNT. ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! !



TASTE of CHOCOLATE

BENEFITTING THE BLOOMINGTON FINE ARTS COUNCIL

Sunday, March 14, 1 - 5 p.m.
Bloomington Center for the Arts
1800 West Old Shakopee Road

Taste of Chocolate is a Midwest dessert competition and benefit for the Bloomington Fine Arts Council presented in partnership with the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by *Minnesota Monthly*, The Toro Company and HealthPartners.

Enjoy savory chocolates by chefs and chocolatiers, entertainment, a silent auction and a raffle drawing for fabulous prizes.

Tickets are \$25 in advance; \$30 at the door. To purchase tickets, stop by the Bloomington Center for the Arts, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, call 952-563-8575 or visit www.tasteofchocolate.org.

FEATURING CHOCOLATES BY

- Award Baking International.
- Blue Water Grill, Hilton Airport.
- CRAVE.
- Creative Confectionaire.
- Denny's Fifth Avenue Bakery.
- Ganache: Truffles for Every Occasion.
- Lily Bloom's Kitchen.
- McCormick and Schmick Seafood Restaurant.
- Obsession Chocolates.
- Patisserie Margo.
- The Art Institutes International.
- Thomasina's Cashew Brittle.

For more information, call Bloomington Fine Arts Council at 952-563-8567.

FOR THE HOMEOWNER HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS



The Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) is accepting applications **through March 27, 2010**, for its Home Improvement Deferred Loan Program.

Eligible repairs include replacing roofs, electrical, heating and plumbing systems, gutters, windows, doors, insulation, siding, soffits and fascia, exterior painting and foundation, sidewalk or step repairs. Ineligible repairs include decorating, additions, finishing basements, remodeling and garage construction.

Loans of up to \$35,000 are available to Bloomington homeowners. There are no monthly payments. Repayment occurs when the home is sold, transferred or conveyed. Interest is charged at an annual rate of 5 percent of the original loan principal for the first 10 years. No additional interest accrues after 10 years.

The loans are to help maintain the condition of Bloomington homes and neighborhoods. Applications are ranked and processed according to need.

For owners of homes built before 1978, a lead risk assessment is required.

Applicants must be the owner-occupant of the home and have sufficient equity to cover the loan amount. Income guidelines apply. *See table below.*

INCOME GUIDELINES

1	\$44,800
2	\$51,200
3	\$57,600
4	\$64,000
5	\$69,100
6	\$74,250
7	\$79,350
8 or more	\$84,500

Includes all residents of household, related and unrelated, including renters. Subject to change.

Loan applications will be accepted at the HRA office at Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, until Friday, March 27, 2010. For more information or to download an application, visit our website or call 952-563-8937.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: HOME LOANS.

CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Located in Bloomington Civic Plaza at the corner of West 98th Street and Old Shakopee Road, the Center for the Arts

is a first-class facility housing six arts organizations. For facility information, call 952-563-8889. For exhibit

information and events, visit www.bloomingtonartcenter.com and click on Exhibitions, or call 952-563-8567.

For all theater tickets, call the Box Office at 952-563-8575.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS:
CENTER FOR THE ARTS.

BLACK BOX THEATER



Don't miss this exciting play about renowned opera diva Maria Callas, featuring actress Karen Weber and director John Command, **March 5 - 28**.

Tickets are \$18 adults; \$16 seniors; \$14 students.

SCHNEIDER THEATER

SPOTLIGHT ON MELODY

Mary Louise Knutson has been called "one of the most exciting, innovative artists to happen to jazz piano in a long time." Don't miss this special concert, featuring Knutson and her highly acclaimed trio, with special guest violinist Randy Sabien, **Sunday, February 28, 2 p.m.**

Tickets are \$22 adults; \$19 students/seniors.

SOUNDS FROM THE CINEMA

Join the Medalist Concert Band as they perform "Sounds from the Cinema," featuring your favorite movie hits from Disney to classic westerns, **Sunday, March 7, 4 p.m.**

Tickets are \$10 adults; \$8 students/seniors.



JOE CHVALA AND THE FLYING FOOT FORUM 20TH ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM

The Flying Foot Forum is a vibrant theater company that blends music, dance and theater to tell some very unusual tales. Come see all their wild characters, **Friday, April 2, 7:30 p.m.**

Tickets are \$25 adults; \$22 students/seniors.

INEZ GREENBERG GALLERY

Art in the Home Show, featuring works by the Handmade Tile Association and the Xylos Gallery, runs **through March 12**.

Functional Dysfunction, featuring works by artists Ray Becoskie and Caprice Glaser, runs **March 19 - May 7**. Artists' reception is Friday, March 19, 6 - 8 p.m.

I Love You Anyways,
by Ray Becoskie and Caprice Glaser.



GALLERY HOURS

Hours: M - F 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Sa 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Su 1 - 10 p.m.

ATRIUM GALLERY

Compassion, featuring artist Julie Taylor, runs **through February 28**.

A Fine Line, featuring works by artist Nancy Yermakoff, runs **March 4 - May 2**.

ONLINE SERVICES
FIND ANSWERS TO YOUR
QUESTIONS

Ask the City is the place where people go online for answers to City of Bloomington questions and service inquiries. How do we know? In 2009, Ask the City was visited by 5,350 people, who viewed 12,492 frequently asked questions (FAQs) and submitted 222 questions and 386 service requests.

Visit the City’s website at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, click on the Ask the City icon and search from hundreds of FAQs. Can’t find what you need? Login and submit a question or service request to the appropriate department.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: ASK THE CITY.

SUBSCRIBE TO E-SUBSCRIBE

To stay informed about City news, use E-Subscribe. This free subscription service sends e-mails and, for some topics, wireless notifications when updates to the most popular pages on the City’s website are posted. More than 3,000 people signed up for E-Subscribe in 2009.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: E-SUBSCRIBE.



NORMANDALE LAKE
AREA IMPROVEMENTS
SIGNS AND KIOSKS HELP
VISITORS NAVIGATE

Navigating around the beautiful Normandale Lake District just became a lot easier with the installation of new signs and kiosks. District entrance signs, pedestrian information kiosks and transit stop signs were installed in multiple locations around the park and business center in October and November.

The Normandale Lake District includes the area bounded by West 84th Street on the south, Stanley Road on the east, I-494 on the north and East Bush Lake Road on the west.

The new signs will help visitors recognize the district as a distinctive neighborhood by unifying the streetscape to enhance the area’s character. The improvements were completely funded by special assessments paid by office owners and tax abatements.

For more information, call Development Coordinator Jennifer Desrude at 952-563-4862.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: NORMANDALE LAKE.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS

PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONDS
NEARLY 5,700 VACCINATED FOR H1N1 FLU VIRUS

As of January 5, Bloomington Public Health (BPH) vaccinated a total of 5,668 people for the H1N1 flu virus. By partnering with the Bloomington School District to bring clinics to public schools in Bloomington, Edina and Richfield, BPH was able to get the vaccine to high risk groups. To date, Public Health has held three large clinics in schools in Bloomington and four in Richfield and Edina.

Bloomington Public Health’s Clinical Services Manager Karen Stanley said that despite the long lines and crowds at some of the clinics, everyone was able to receive the vaccination.

“Our goal is to always be accessible to everyone who wants to be vaccinated,” Stanley said. “We’re a safety net for people, especially the uninsured.”

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Centers for Disease Control established priority groups to receive the limited amounts of the vaccine that were available in late 2009. The priority groups included all people six months to 24 years old, pregnant women, caregivers of infants younger than six months, healthcare and emergency medical personnel, and those with underlying health conditions. To effectively administer the vaccine to priority groups, Public Health worked closely with the School District, health care professionals, police, fire and emergency medical services, and child care providers.

The MDH opened the vaccinations to all groups in mid-December as more of the vaccine was produced and became available.

Continue to protect yourself

- Get vaccinated.
- Cover your nose and mouth with your sleeve when you cough or sneeze.
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water.
- Clean your hands before eating or preparing food.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- People with an underlying medical condition, pregnant women, young children (especially under age two), and people 65 or older should contact their health care providers if they have flu symptoms or have been exposed to people with the flu.

For more information, call Public Health’s Karen Stanley at 952-563-8990 or Lisa Brodsky at 952-563-4962.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: FLU SHOT.



INTERNET SHOPPING
STAYING SAFE WHILE MAKING
ONLINE PURCHASES



The holidays may be behind us, but shopping online is an activity that takes place all year long, and with good reason. Shopping on the Internet can save valuable time and money. However, it also exposes users to scams and fraud. The Bloomington Police Department suggests following these online shopping safety tips from the Federal Trade Commission:

- 1 **Know who you are dealing with** when online. Anyone can set up shop on the Web. Confirm a seller’s identity by visiting the Better Business Bureau at www.bbb.org.
- 2 **Pay by credit or charge card.** This will protect you under the Fair Credit Billing Act. Under this law, you have the right to dispute charges and withhold payment while the creditor is checking them out.
- 3 **Keep a paper trail.** Print and save records of all your online transactions.
- 4 **Look for secure websites.** An icon such as a lock on the browser’s status bar or a URL for a website that begins with “https” are good signs that you may be on a secure site.

For more information, visit the Federal Trade Commission at www.ftc.gov.

BRING HOME SOME GREEN
ANNUAL TREE SALE HELPS PLANT HUNDREDS OF TREES

Each year, the City plants trees in parks and other public areas to ensure that Bloomington’s urban forest continues to be one of the community’s treasures. In fact, the City has planted more than 1,000 trees over the last few years. To increase the number of trees on private properties, Park Maintenance holds a public tree sale. Based on last year’s sales, 280 trees will be available for purchase this spring.

TREE ORDER FORM

Bloomington residents only. All trees are bare root, one-and-a-quarter to one-and-a-half inches in diameter and cost \$50 each. *Trees are not guaranteed.*

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

Fill in number of each tree type desired. Maximum 5 trees total per household, \$50 each. Check must accompany order.

_____ Autumn Blaze red maple	_____ Hackberry
_____ Imperial honeylocust	_____ Northwood red maple
_____ Prairie Fire crab apple	_____ Snowdrift crab apple
_____ River birch	_____ Green Mountain sugar maple

Total trees X \$50 ea. = \$ Total cost

Pick up trees at 1800 West Old Shakopee Road on **Saturday, May 1, 9 - 11 a.m.**

Send check and form to City of Bloomington, Park Maintenance,
1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3027.



Available tree species include: Autumn Blaze red maple, Hackberry, Imperial honeylocust, Northwood red maple, Prairie Fire crab apple, Snowdrift crab apple, River birch and Green Mountain sugar maple. Orders will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Trees are not guaranteed. For more information, call the Maintenance Division at 952-563-8760.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: TREE SALE.

Red Maple courtesy of Paul Wray, Iowa State University, Bugwood.org